

# THE ACADEMICIAN.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK. MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30 1813.

NO. 13.

PUBLISHED SEMI-MONTHLY, BY ALBERT & JOHN W. PICKET, AT 3 DOLLARS PER ANN.

## THE ACADEMICIAN.

### NO. XIII.

#### ON AN ENGLISH COURSE OF INSTRUCTION.

*Pueris quæ maxime ingenium alant, atque animum  
augeant, prælegenda.* Quintilian.

*With boys, those things which tend most to nourish the  
genius, and to enlarge the mind, are proper to be read.*

*Non enim tam præclaram est scire Latine,\* quam turpe  
nescire.* Cicero.

*To be well acquainted with one's own language, is not so  
much a thing to boast of, as not to be well acquainted with  
it, is a disgrace.*

It is to our schools that we are indebted for the first germs of literary and scientific knowledge. To these then, should we direct our attention, establish and nourish them in every habitable place in our country, and hold out sufficient inducements for men of abilities to engage in the instruction of our youth, and communicate to them that knowledge which will moralize the affections and prepare them for fulfilling the duties in society to which they may be called.

The first exercises which are usually adopted in schools are spelling and reading. These perhaps are the most useful, as the future progress of the child in learning depends much on the manner of his commencement. The common method of teaching however, is extremely detrimental to the learner; he learns spelling alone till he can master all the detached words that may be laid before him, he is forbidden to read a simple sentence for fear it will prevent him from spelling; but it appears to us that the most insipid and unthinking person must see that spelling and reading ought to occupy a child's attention at the same time, as in fact they are one and the same thing. As soon as he can spell words in columns, he ought to spell them in sentences, and read them as soon as he has spelled them. This practice will in a few months radicate the child in one of the most important auxiliary branches of early instruction.

When our pupil has acquired a due facility in reading, the next step is to make him acquainted with the simplest definitions of grammar, and as he advances, we should enter more largely into the subject, teach him the power of words by their synonyms and by derivation, and exercise his judg-

ment by the frequent inversion or transposition of sentences. By this method the pupil must attend to his subject, and discriminate between words and their meaning. Now this may all be done under the instruction of a judicious teacher, in less time than is usually occupied in merely learning to spell: but the effect on the pupil's mind is very different; by the first, he is prepared for commencing a liberal course of studies; by the latter, he is confined to the circle of his own ignorance. Teachers who sacrifice the time of youth to the latter of these methods, must surely be unconscious of the evil they cherish, and parents must be indifferent to their offspring to allow it.

The principal value of education arises from the exercise which it gives to the faculties of the mind, and from the habits which it has a tendency to form. In this respect we think that our radical English grammar schools are peculiarly valuable. No department of early education gives more exercise to the memory, the judgment, and all the moral powers, than the science of grammar. But in the course of instruction, we do not mean to substitute that jargon of words, which is rattled off daily in most of our schools, for grammatical knowledge. We would have our pupils taught English grammar as scrupulously as the Latin. By this method, even the first elements of the language cannot be acquired, without such a patient exertion of memory as must contribute essentially to improve it in readiness and retention; and the frequent repetitions that are required throughout the whole course of study, form the habit of industrious application, while they store the mind with the most valuable treasure.

Without an acquaintance with grammar, no man can be reckoned a polite scholar, and he will want many helps for writing and speaking well, which the knowledge of this science would afford him. We would, therefore, most earnestly recommend to all persons engaged in the instruction of youth, to make the grammar of the English language the groundwork of the child's early education. Make him not only commit the words to memory, but make him understand the principles of the science, and apply them to miscellaneous reading. Make him read selections from Addison, Johnson, or Pope, as a Latin scholar would read Cæsar or Horace. The English language, although perhaps not so perfect in its formation as the Latin or Greek, yet its construction is simple and elegant, and may be taught with the greatest precision. It is only necessary, that its nature and the true method of teaching it be understood, and the utility of it will be acknowledged. It is but lately since any attention was paid to the der-

\* He evidently means one's mother tongue.



iation of English words. The learner was obliged to force into his memory a catalogue of words detached and unintelligible, and unaided by analogy or derivation; but now he is placed in a very different situation. He sees that English words are derived from one another in as clear a manner as in any other language. From the words *civil* and *human*, with the knowledge of the prefixes and affixes, he may readily form a number of words from these radicals, and all of them will be easily understood. For example, *civil*, *civilly*, *civilize*, *civilizing*, *civilizer*, *civilization*, *civilian*, *civility*, *uncivil*, *uncivilly*, &c.; *human*, *humanely*, *humanity*, *inhuman*, &c.—By this simple method the secret of teaching the English language is unlocked. These hints are not given to the classical scholar; they are designed to throw some light on the only true method of teaching the English language, which has heretofore been left in the hands of men who were totally unacquainted with its structure. The editors, in the American School Class-Books, have endeavoured to simplify the principles to the juvenile understanding, and form text books for the convenience of teachers. How far they have succeeded, is left with a discerning public to determine.

Great however, as, in our estimation, the advantages of a grammatical course of instruction are, we are far from wishing that in any stage of education, they should be the only object of attention. We are aware that the difficulty of acquiring a grammatical knowledge of our language is great; but we maintain, and are supported by experience, that at least one half of the time usually spent in the common way, might be saved for the acquisition of other branches of knowledge. The attention, when exercised long upon one subject, becomes fatigued and languid; and it is not the least important, or the least difficult duty of those to whom the education of youth is entrusted, so to regulate their studies, that in the hours of labour their minds may be kept on the stretch, without being overstrained, and that every moment employed in business may be employed to advantage. With two hours a day of assiduous preparation, and an equal portion of time spent under the direction of an able teacher, a child of ordinary capacity would, we are confident, advance more rapidly in his studies, than if he were doomed to drudge eight or ten hours daily at the same business. This would leave a great proportion of his time vacant for other studies; and would thus remove one of the strongest objections which have been urged against a systematic course of instruction.

In varying the studies of our pupils, we should endeavour to adapt them, as much as possible, to the different powers of the mind, that they may all be invigorated by their proper exercise. With the study of language, which improves the memory, let arithmetic be joined, which affords as much exercise to the reasoning powers as any branch of learning to which

the attention of a child can be directed. An early and accurate acquaintance with arithmetical notation and numeration, is peculiarly calculated to impart habits of precision, arrangement, and classification. Notation, originating in the operation of necessity on the powers of the human mind, is an object worthy of the attention of the philosopher; while, at the same time, from its distinctness and simplicity, it serves as a most important exercise to the juvenile understanding. Arithmetic, according to the usual modes of teaching it, is little more indeed than an exercise of memory; but, if taught judiciously, with a constant reference to the principles on which its rules are founded, it will contribute as much as any other department of early instruction, to the vigour and acuteness of the powers of the understanding, and will give a tendency to order and method, which will be of the most essential importance in every mental operation. To the teacher who wishes to make the rules of arithmetic conducive to improvement of the reasoning powers, we refer him to the article of *Arithmetic* in our journal.

When our pupil has acquired a competent knowledge of the principles of arithmetic, he may proceed to the study of algebra, which possesses nearly the same advantages, and, along with them, others conducive to a still higher degree of mental culture.—The study of algebra confers the power of invention and combination; it accustoms the mind to general reasoning, while at the same time it leaves it at liberty to check and correct that reasoning at every step.

In connection with the study of arithmetic, geography may with propriety be made an object of attention. Were it only as an exercise of memory, and subsidiary to the knowledge of history, the study of geography would be highly valuable. It is valuable too, as it forms the habit of arrangement, and of associating names with objects of which they are the signs. But it is chiefly valuable, because it is the proper vehicle for many important topics of information; and by leading the mind beyond the narrow sphere of its own observation, it enlarges its comprehension and weakens its prejudices, and forms an interesting link between mere sensation and abstract speculation.

Natural history is another branch of knowledge by no means to be neglected in a liberal course of education. Of all the studies in which the youthful mind can be engaged, this is at once the most entertaining and the most instructive. Conversant about the objects in which we feel the earliest concern, it is peculiarly calculated to gratify the eager curiosity of children; while, by engaging this strongest principle in the juvenile breast, it trains them to habits of observing accurately, of attaching distinct conceptions to words, and of classifying and arranging the subjects of knowledge; it gives a new interest to every thing around them, and, by extending their acquaintance with the works of nature, it enlarges their ideas of



their great Author, towards whom it of course inspires them with warmer devotion, and with deeper reverence. "I would recommend botany," says an eminent naturalist, for its own sake. I have often alluded to its benefits as a mental exercise; nor can any exceed it in raising curiosity, gratifying a taste for beauty and ingenuity of contrivance, or sharpening the powers of discrimination. What then can be better adapted for young persons?"

The next study in which we would engage our pupil, is the study of the mathematics, which, from the days of Thales to our own, has ever been regarded as of the most essential importance in the culture of the mind. We are told by almost every writer on the mental powers, or the means of improving them, that if we would enjoy the use of those powers in all their perfection, we must devote ourselves to the study of mathematical science. This alone, we are assured, or at least, this more than any other study, will correct the wild flights of imagination, and will give to judgment its due superiority; will teach us, by perpetual examples, to conceive with clearness, to connect our ideas in a train of dependence, to reason with strength and demonstration, and to distinguish between truth and falsehood. Mathematical knowledge is, as it were, the groundwork of most of the other sciences. To natural philosophy, in all its branches, it is indispensably necessary. Mathematics may be called the language which that science speaks, without which scarce a principle it unfolds, or a fact it communicates, can be properly understood. When our pupil, therefore, has acquired a competent knowledge of mathematics, let his attention be directed to natural philosophy, which will open to him a wide field of entertainment and instruction, and tend wonderfully to expand the powers of the mind. What employment can be more interesting, or more worthy of a rational being, than to investigate the laws by which the universe is regulated, to describe the phenomena which results from these laws, and to trace them back through the long chain of causes which may have contributed to produce them? Such an exercise will necessarily form the mind to habits of accurate and persevering observation, of patient inquiry, of abstract speculation, and of correct reasoning.—While it restrains the thoughts within the limits of reality, it at the same time affords abundant scope for the most sublime conceptions, and the most extensive flights of imagination. Carrying us beyond the boundaries of sense, it weakens each selfish feeling, by interesting us in every thing around us. It is the best preparation for the study of mind; for the rigour with which its researches are conducted, and its cautious mode of reasoning by induction from ascertained phenomena, check that extravagant rage for theory, which is the bane of all science. To religion it is a most powerful auxiliary, extending our knowledge of the works of creation, and leading us "through nature, up to nature's God."

With the reading of history should be combined the study of political economy, and the peculiar laws of our country. in so far as to enable youth to understand exactly the extent of our respective rights and privileges, and the tenure by which they are held. To a person who has made himself acquainted with the general nature of things, and to have some knowledge of the properties of human nature, the study of history is peculiarly edifying. While it exhibits man in all possible circumstances, it enables him to refer to their true cause all the diversities of human character; and, amidst the almost boundless variety which obtains in the sentiments and modes of action that prevails in different communities, he learns to discriminate those which originate in the native and universal feelings of mankind, from those which are the result of local or national contingencies. He reaps the advantage of the accumulated experience of all nations and ages; and in the progress of states and their decline, can trace, with unerring precision, the causes of their prosperity and of their ruin. He sees the operations of Providence displayed here on the most magnificent scale; and while he compares the end with the beginning of the important transactions which history records, he obtains the most exalted and comprehensive view of those grand principles which regulate the moral government of the Great Ruler among the nations. His ideas of society are enlarged, and he escapes from those illiberal prejudices, which the love of country, amiable as it is in itself, is too apt to excite against those who live under different governments, and in other climes. "There is scarcely any folly or vice," says Lord Bolingbroke, "more epidemical among the sons of men, than that ridiculous and hateful vanity, by which the people of any country are apt to prefer themselves to those of any other, and to make their own customs, and manners, and opinions, the standard of right and wrong, of true and false." This vanity is effectually removed by the enlightening study of history. He who is accustomed to contemplate the transactions of other nations, to view them in their mutual dependencies and connections, and to take a warm concern in all their interests, learns to consider the community to which he belongs as only a part of a still greater community; and without necessarily becoming indifferent to its prosperity and to its fame, is enabled to discover the value of opinions and practices of a foreign growth. To every student, however, the history of his own country is by far the most interesting. To trace the origin of those laws and institutions to which, in common with his fellow citizens, he is subject, and of those customs and establishments by which the character of a nation is at once indicated and determined, is an employment no less pleasing to curiosity, than it is improving in its tendency. To the native American, the study of the history of his own country is, in this respect, particularly important and gratifying. In no country



have all the great virtues been more eminently displayed; no where has the struggle for civil privileges been carried on with more perseverance and success: liberty has here advanced, through many vicissitudes and convulsions, to the most perfect triumph she ever obtained; protected by every security which wisdom can devise; and accompanied with all the blessings which usually follow in her train, arts, science, commerce, pure religion, and enlightened toleration.

While the student is engaged in the acquisition of these accomplishments, let him be carefully trained to the practice of composition. The beneficial effects of this practice are too many to be here enumerated, and more extensive than we can easily calculate.—The perfect command which it will give him of his own language, and the facility of communicating to others his sentiments and ideas, are perhaps among the least of its advantages. In whatever study he may be engaged, his progress will be more accelerated by the practice of composition, than by any other means. This will accustom him to think on every subject for himself; to ascertain exactly the extent of his attainments; and thus to advance with a steady progress towards proficiency. To write one page from his own reflections, will give him a more perfect knowledge of his subject than to read a volume. The habit of correct composition almost necessarily produces precision in our ideas, and perspicuity in our reasonings; and by obliging us to think closely, prevents us from resting satisfied with vague and superficial notions. The improvement of our taste is another effect of the practice of composition, scarcely less valuable than those which we have enumerated. He who has learned to relish the beauties of nature and of art, has access to the most inexhaustible sources of enjoyment. It is of the highest importance, therefore, to the future happiness of our pupils, to imbue their minds with an early relish for the pleasures of taste. Nor is it more essential to their happiness, than it is conducive to their excellence. A taste for what is great and beautiful, is favourable to the growth of many virtues; and sanguine hopes may be entertained, that they whose minds have this elegant and liberal turn, will become conspicuous for the discharge of all the higher and more important duties of human life. There are, indeed, few good dispositions of any kind with which the improvement of taste is not in some degree connected. It increases, by frequent exercise, the sensibility of all our tender and benevolent feelings; while, on the other hand, by impressing us with a deep sense of propriety, it tends to weaken all the fierce and violent emotions. To be devoid of taste, is justly regarded as an unpromising symptom in youth, indicating their propensity to low gratifications, and their incapacity for any thing but what is vulgar and illiberal.

Such are the attainments which constitute a liberal English education; and such is the order, accord-

ing to which, in our opinion, they ought to be acquired. But small is the proportion of mankind, whose means or circumstances will enable them to cultivate their faculties by so extensive and liberal education. A numerous class of men, destined for particular professions and employments, receive only such an education as seems necessary to qualify them for the situations which they are to occupy in society; and a still more numerous class, doomed to toil, almost from infancy, for a scanty subsistence, receive but little or no education. Fortunately, men may become good and respectable members of society, without any very extensive acquaintance with science and literature; but whatever station or circumstances an individual may be placed in, it is indispensably necessary to his respectability and his happiness, that he receive such an education as may enable him to exert the powers of his mind, and prepare him for all the duties of life. Among all classes of society, a proper education is the only permanent source of good conduct; and it is now pretty generally understood, that national prosperity and happiness depend, more than on any other cause, on the diffusion of instruction among all orders of the people. Ignorance is the parent of depravity; and most of the vices which degrade the human character, particularly of the lower class of the community, may be traced to the want of knowledge.—But we have cause to rejoice that education, both scientific and religious, is brought almost to every man's door: the rich and the poor, from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, seem to participate in this great national blessing.\*

“*Si literis non potes, et virtuti stude. Nemo non ad illam satis ingeniosus ubi non acumen quaritur, sed voluntas. . . . Majus tutiusque est virtute quam literis clarum fieri. . . . Quod si ad virtutem animi, literarum lux accesserit, tum demum consummatum quiddam atque perfectum est id quidem, si qua in rebus humanis potest esse perfectio.*”

PETRARCH.

“*If you cannot study letters, study virtue. There is nobody who is not ingenious enough to be good, for it is not so much acuteness which is required as inclination. It is greater and safer to become famous for virtue than learning. But if to virtue learning shall be added, then at last arises something consummate and perfect, if there can be any perfection in human nature.*”

\* In this essay we have availed ourselves of several hints which we have seen in various volumes. We have not, however, met with any course of English instruction, that in our opinion, was well calculated for English scholars. We have methodized what hints we could obtain, and likewise added our own, which indeed compose nearly the whole essay. Of the Latin and Greek course, we have written at length in a preceding number.



the manner of teaching Mathematics, and appreciating in examinations, the knowledge of those who have studied them.

(Continued from page 179.)

THE sciences are applied to practical purposes by means of formulas, or mechanical processes, with which it is necessary to become familiar, in order to work with quickness, certainty, and exactness. This is all that can be required with respect to the small number of objects that are actually of frequent occurrence; and it is also easily acquired whenever the necessity of it is felt. It cannot be denied that a man, accustomed to the government of his own power of attention, will soon find himself able to perform, with readiness and accuracy, whatever intellectual operations he may be compelled to repeat frequently. Necessity and habit then will insure practical ability.

It often seems surprising to some, to see a pupil, who has been well instructed in mathematics, experience some difficulty in the performance of numerical calculations; and hence the conclusion is frequently drawn, that he is not prepared for the duties of those professions in which there are many of these calculations to be performed. This is one of the common-place complaints of those who are wedded to petty details; but they may be answered, that men without instruction in principles, attain mechanical facility in long numerical calculations from the simple fact, that they go through with a great many of them; and that the knowledge acquired by the pupil in question, will hardly be likely to prevent him from meeting with the same success, when he shall be obliged to devote himself daily to the same labour. He may, as well as another, acquire, lose and recover, according to circumstances, the habit of calculation, for it is to be considered merely in the light of a habit.

With regard to such subjects as are complicated, there can be no inconvenience in recurring to books; and there does not appear in any case, a necessity for loading the memory with demonstrations and formulas. The things of which it is important to become thoroughly possessed, are, the march of methods; the import of technical terms; the comprehension of the idioms of the language, or the faculty of seizing upon the sense of such phrases as may be peculiar to the principal writers who have treated upon any science, so as to be able, upon the first glance, to understand their works, or at least such of them as have been already studied, and may eventually be needed; and finally, the nature and connexion of the subjects which they contain must be known, so as to be able to consult them with profit whenever it may be required.

The most practised memory does not always attain this object; the narrowness of the range in which facts committed to memory must be included,

does not allow a sufficient variety in these facts to exhibit examples of the principal difficulties that occur in the study of authors.

Since it is not an effort of memory that constitutes a true knowledge of mathematics, and since it rather limits than increases the intellectual faculties, it is then wrong to employ an oral examination, resting upon memory alone, to determine the capacity of those who devote themselves to the study of these sciences. Accordingly some men of the most extensive acquisitions, have ingenuously acknowledged, that they did not believe themselves able to pass an examination of this description, although it turned upon subjects far below their actual attainments. La Grange himself, in one of the lessons given to the Polytechnic School, has been heard to make this confession with that modesty by which he was so eminently characterized: and in fact, geometers content themselves with possessing the spirit of methods, and with knowing how to revert to details whenever it may be necessary, and do not undertake to deposit them in the memory; they are cautious of condemning themselves to a fastidious labour which would blunt the edge of invention and research. Professors themselves, who run over these details in succession, attempt to recall those only of which they may have need during a very limited interval of time. With what justice then can that be exacted from the disciples which is not required of their master? Who is unacquainted with the time that they are compelled to lose in going over and over again with the tedious repetition of the subjects of an examination, in order to keep themselves in breath, and to prepare themselves to answer at once upon all that they have learned? Can it be supposed that the disgust which naturally follows so monotonous a labour, will not for the most part arrest the progress of young persons at the limit where their examination ends, and will not frequently induce them to relieve their minds as soon as possible, of knowledge which they acquired through a series of painful labours for the parade of a single day, because they have never felt the charm that variety throws over studies, when they present objects which are new and not easily exhausted? Thus many, guided often in this point by their masters, study the taste and the habits of the examiners, confine themselves to the search of whatever may abridge and soften the trial they are to undergo; and reject as useless to themselves whatever does not bear an immediate relation to it. Many who are inwardly of this opinion, may be prevented by private reasons from allowing its justness; but I do not hesitate to declare that during almost twenty years which have been employed in public institutions, to which none were admitted without previous examination, I have met with abundant examples of what I have now advanced.



Let me not be misunderstood; it is the general mode of conducting examinations that I would oppose, and not those distinguished men to whom the government has successively entrusted the care of judging of the candidates for the public service. I am persuaded that they have discharged this duty in the most advantageous manner; but it is not enough to have heard the answers of the candidates at an examination, in order to form a just estimate of this test. It is necessary to have observed the influence which it has upon their minds during the time that they are preparing for it, and after it has been undergone. Nothing appears more satisfactory, at the first glance, than to see these youths develop with facility, clearness, and even with elegance, all the subjects required; to observe the acuteness with which they answer all the opposite objections. But what a loss of time, what a waste of faculties, accompany the method which is used to secure these advantages, and how fleeting is the result!

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The following is extracted from a volume of essays, under the title of the BRIEF REMARKER, from the pen of the Rev. EZRA SAMPSON. Most of these essays were first published in the *Connecticut Courant*, and have been circulated through the medium of our literary journals throughout the Union. They display much reading, depth of thought, and accurate observation. The style is chaste, simple and nervous. We think they are worthy of public patronage, and we cannot but agree with the judicious and learned Editor of the *Evening Post*, Wm. Coleman, Esq. that "had they appeared in the days of Addison, they would have justly claimed a place among the writings of the British essayists." We know of no two American writers who excel in their various departments the Rev. Mr. SAMPSON, and our citizen, Mr. SAMUEL WOODWORTH; the former as an essayist, and the latter as a poet, whose compositions we consider, from the harmony of the verse, their moral tendency, and the native talents displayed as marking a mind that is yet by its efforts to exalt the poetical character of our country.

#### THE BRIEF REMARKER.

*"Read not to contradict or confute, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."*

LORD BACON.

THE age we live in has been remarkably a reading age. Books are more numerous and of more easy access, than at any former period of time; and the number of readers has increased astonishingly since the middle of the last century. In a general view, this is of good omen, for reading is one of the principal keys of knowledge; it unlocks

as it were a mine of intellectual wealth, and contributes to its general diffusion. There is considerable reason to think however, that the progress of real sound knowledge has not kept pace with the progress of reading; for the slow pace of the former in comparison to that of the latter, there being the several causes which here follow.

By reason of the abundance and superabundance of books, the best are commonly read but superficially, and, by many, not read at all; the attention of the reading public being distracted with such a boundless variety. If there were only one book in the world, and its copies so multiplied that it were in every one's hands, almost every body would have it by heart; or, if they were only a few books, and they accessible to all, those few would be pondered and studied till a considerable part of their contents were treasured up in the minds and memories of the generality of readers. But now that books are so numerous and innumerable, the readers skip from one to another without settling their attention upon any, so that many who are fairly entitled to the credit of great reading, are very little improved in their intellectual faculties. They greedily devour books, but duly appropriate scarce any thing of their contents; like eaters that have a voracious appetite, but a bad digestion.

Besides this, with the bulk of the bookish tribe, reading is come to be an idle amusement rather than a serious and laborious occupation. They read for pleasure, more than for profit. The acquirement of a fund of really useful knowledge scarcely comes within the scope of their object, which is mainly, to beguile the tedious hours by furnishing food for the imagination. And hence is it, that no books are so palatable, or so generally read and with so much eagerness, as the lighter compositions which are fraught with amusement, but barren of sound instruction. A novel even of the lowest cast, finds more readers than a serious work of great merit.

Moreover, the perpetual influx of new books has occasioned a raging appetite for novelty of some kind or other, no matter what: so that the attention of most readers is directed rather to what is new, than to what is valuable and excellent. This kind of curiosity is insatiable; for the more it is fed, the more it craves. Old authors are neglected, because they are old, and new ones engross the attention, because they are new. The standard compositions of former ages are cast aside as lumber; a new pretender, with less than a fourth part of their abilities, is sure to find a momentary welcome at least.

From these causes it happens, that a great deal of reading does by no means imply a great stock of valuable knowledge. On the contrary it often leaves the mind empty of almost every thing but vanity; none being more vain, nor more intolerant



ble, than those who having learnt by rote a multitude of maxims and facts, deal them out by the gross on all occasions, and in all companies. The food they have derived from reading, lies in their minds undigested, and while it occasions a preternatural tumour there, it gives neither growth nor strength. Their reading has scarcely brought into exercise any one of the intellectuals besides the memory, which has been loaded and kept in perpetual action, whilst their understandings and judgments remained dormant. They are proud that they have read so much, but have reason rather to be ashamed that they know so little.

One who would really profit by reading, must take heed *what* he reads, and *how*.

The use of reading is to render one more wise and virtuous, rather than more learned; and that point is to be gained not so much from the quantity as the quality of the books we peruse. No single individual has leisure enough, nor is any life long enough, for a thorough perusal of even the tenth part of the books now extant in the English language. A selection is therefore necessary, and much depends upon making it judiciously. An inconsiderable number of well chosen and well studied books, will enable one to make far greater advances in real knowledge, than lightly skimming over hundreds of volumes taken up promiscuously.

In reading, attention is to be paid always to the *how*, as well as to the *what*. The proper object of reading is not merely to inform us of what others think, but also to furnish us with materials for thinking ourselves, or for the employ and exercise of our judgments and understandings, and the whole of our intellectual and moral faculties. It is not enough that it supplies us with a multitude of facts; for the knowledge of facts is valuable to us, chiefly for the inferences that we ourselves may draw from them, or because they furnish us with the means of exercising and exerting our own powers in the way of comparing, reasoning, and judging, and of drawing sound conclusions of the future from the past.

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Ο Βίος Βραχύς, καὶ τὰ τέχνη μακρά.

HIPPOCRATES.

*Life is short, but art is long.*

"We all of us complain of the shortness of time, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives are spent either in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them."

SENECA.

SUCH are the sentiments of a man whose days

were spent in philosophic contemplation. "He has described our inconsistencies with ourselves in this particular, by all those various turns of expression and thought which are peculiar to his writings."

In our dreams of future happiness, we are apt to overlook that upon which it rests; we seek with avidity every thing external, which, from its appearance, is calculated to render our life one scene of unalloyed felicity, interrupted by no billows of contention, nor storms of adversity. In acting thus, we do but dream. Happiness is not composed of external contingencies; its foundation is in the mind, which neither worries itself about the things of the moment or of an hour to come. The mind, curbed in its desires by the dictates of philosophy, or swayed by the precepts of the divine volume, puts at defiance the commotion of feelings by which a man, without such firm friends, is agitated, and his passions are enraged.

Could we divest ourselves of that eager desire for the things of this world, and reflect a moment on the true means of happiness and the enjoyment of time, our reason would point not to wealth or honour, but to a contented mind, stored with learning, and dependant on its Creator. But driven by our passions, the hopes of *something future*, we pass our time in idle expectation of what may come, overleap the bounds which nature has set to the accomplishment of our wishes, and neither gain nor show any thing by acquisition, which will truly honour man, or him who made him a rational being. Such is our constitution, that we are uneasy unless an object engage our attention; and from a combination of circumstances beyond the control of men in general, we are naturally led to consult the means by which time may be made a source of real pleasure, and a fulfilment of our desires be the ultimate result. Hence the various courses men pursue in their search, which to many seems with poison and death. While some centre their affections in the accumulation of wealth, others are fired with an enthusiastic ambition to enrol their names among those whose conquests have desolated kingdoms, and spread terror and devastation wherever they have directed their march: others to be registered among those whose actions or writings will enlighten posterity, and excite their veneration for the splendour of their genius; and others again, from imbecility of mind, or an uncontrolled sway of their passions, are compelled to licentiousness, and spend their life in a manner at which reason revolts, and religion shudders.

He who is truly wise, or who has learned to estimate happiness, will preserve a middle course, neither suffer the splendour of the warrior, the veneration due to genius, or the enchantments of dissipation, to allure him from the path from which, if he deviate, felicity disappears and misery ensues



Est modus in rebus sunt certi denique fines,  
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.\*

HORACE.

The march of the conqueror, attended by the acclamations of victorious soldiers, the plaudits of his countrymen, and the lustre of victory, does not insure happiness, and is nothing in comparison to that of the share of the humble peasant, every day of whose life is uninterrupted by the cares which harass the mind of the hero, at whose glory envy kindles, and malice points the dagger of death.

The hope of literary immortality is not less powerful in its impulse. Thousands engage in its cause, but few, as in military legions, gain the palm of conquest, or pass to that country "from whose bourne no traveller returns," without the mortification of a diminution of character, or a presage of literary oblivion. Some indeed, forgetful that millions, whose volumes have long ago sunk into forgetfulness, or are only found in the libraries of the curious or learned, entertained the same fond expectations of being estimated a genius, and benefactor to mankind, and have, from a false estimate of their talents, or from the progressive improvement of things, dropped into their graves with a confidence which has never been realized.

The life of an author is beset with cares and perplexities. Exclusive of poverty, which often chills genius, his mind is harassed by the bickerings of envy and aspersions of hostility, from which no integrity of intention or splendour of talent can exempt him. He is fearful, that from some unaccountable caprice which often exhibits itself in the literary world, his reputation may be diminished, that he may be stripped of the means of subsistence, and obscurity be the common receptacle of his fame and felicity.

The sensibilities of that man whose god is money, and whose most inveterate foe is charity or generosity, are little to be envied. Misery has poured all her phials of wrath upon him. Every knock at his door is dreaded, lest it be a claim upon his humanity to succour the oppressed or to defend injured innocence. No joy sparkles near the miser's fire-side; companions are excluded, and reciprocal friendships, which constitute social happiness, are banished. Sunk in gloom, the affections which fit man for society are concentrated in one object, from which if he be separated by the fickleness of fortune, his mind desponds, and social nature becomes misanthropy. The felicities of the miser are extremely circumscribed; even

Hope, eager hope, the assassin of our joys,  
All present blessings treading under foot,

\* *There is a medium in all things. There are certain limits, beyond or at this side of which propriety cannot exist.*

deserts him, when misfortune assails; that hope which animates mortals to the last period of their existence, and points, with delusive finger, at worldly objects which never are overtaken, or if grasped, prove as empty as the shadow of past pleasures, or the dreams of a summer's eve.

Αἰ δ' ἀπὸ βροτῶν φύγας, ὡς λόγος,  
Καλὰς βλεπτοῖν οὐμασί, μάλιστα δὲ.

EURIP.

Exiles, the proverb says, subsist on hope;  
Delusive hope still points to distant good—  
To good that mocks approach.

From this degraded state of man, out of which no real happiness springs, we pass to him, whose course, at the moment, seems to yield all that desire can afford, or even hope expect; but the fatal consequences of which are too often seen not to be dreaded and lamented. He who revels in all the scenes which dissipation or wealth can afford, must long have disrobed himself of every manly virtue, and every principle of religion. We say *long*, because no man becomes really profligate at once. A relaxation of moral discipline opens the door to depravity, which once commenced, continually increases, unless prevented by some extraordinary means. Resolutions to abstain from iniquity, after a long and successful practice, seldom last longer than the temptation is absent; and experience shows, that these are so often made and so easily broken, that to resolve and to commit are almost identified with cause and effect, or the promise of performance and its immediate infringement. The voice of Providence, or a long separation from wickedness, are perhaps the only two things which with success can steady wavering resolution, or recall vagrant passion into a uniform course. Even the death-bed is seen to fail of that benefit which might be expected to result to him who had been stretched upon it without a hope of recovery, and to his friends, who perhaps, in the moments of their grief, which absorbed all other concerns. But the one no sooner regains his health, than his actions bespeak no contriteness of heart; and the other, whether the *mercy* of God has been manifested by convalescence, or his *will*, by a removal of friends to another world, on a return to worldly concerns and temptations, bury in the grave of those for whom they grieved, all that should be remembered, and all that is calculated to make them happy.

—————Dociles imitandis  
Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus.

JUVENAL.

The mind of mortals in perverseness strong,  
Imbibes with dire docility the wrong.

Among the calamities which teem with misery, and which afflict the lives of individuals, none is



more to be dreaded than a total departure from moral or religious principle. Atheists in practice, if not in theory, acting as though no Providence watched their actions, or as if they placed no reliance on the Supreme Being, to expect, when reason alarms them, or death points to the grave, (for reason and death will speak at times to the most abandoned,) not the favour of one whom they have wantonly offended, either in this world or that to which we are all rapidly hastening, to be deserted even by Hope, the companion of man to the last stage of his existence, under every shape of misfortune, in the hour of retribution, is a state dreadful in its results and harassing to the soul. Yet such is the fate of those who, through a relaxation of moral discipline, or a voluntary infringement of those laws necessary to the happiness and preservation of society and themselves, and for the keeping or violation of which, temporary and eternal condemnation is as certain as the law which regulates attraction.

Few, indeed, of the multitude of those who have lived a life of unreal pleasure, and have arrived at an advanced age, exert that force of reason which is necessary to moral safety. Habits long persevered in become a second nature, and to thwart her operations is no easy task. Few such men, we say, ever exercise reflection so severely as to restrain them from the practice of a course which they have followed for years, to cause them to desist from follies; to apply themselves to the cultivation of virtue, or attend to the claims of suffering humanity; to live worthy men and good Christians; to perform the offices of good husbands, fathers, and members of society; to die with a peaceful conscience, looking forward to an eternal happiness;—and at whose death, the tears of a country drop with sorrow on their tombs.

Thus time passes, and thousands pass, seeking after they know not what, and when obtained, harass the mind, and leave no substantial joy behind.—Considering the frailties, the pursuits of man, well might Hippocrates exclaim,

Life is short, but art is long.

Time bears us all towards that country to which we shall ultimately arrive. The wise will provide for the journey. Unalloyed happiness, though the aim of all, is not to be expected in this world. Were our passions mute and passive, our wishes might be gratified; but external causes agitate them, which subject our reason to their control, and with it moral principle; for a steady and uniform integrity of conduct is based upon the decisions of reason, which, together with all our faculties, is influenced by the maxims impressed upon our minds, and the habits and manners under which we are educated. The joys of the eternal throne are the promised reward to those who triumph over their passions and the world. Virtue is the basis on which rests all

earthly felicity. Riches may confer a momentary splendour—victories may bring a meteoric glory and brilliance—genius may elevate, and learning spread the reputation of men—but time, as it flows and brings all these, unless it brings virtue, brings nothing to the purpose: these are transitory, virtue is eternal: virtue is the source of happiness; its reward, immortality; and they only are wise, who, while they aim at the one, forget not the other.

ASCHAM.

## PHILOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT.

GRAMMAR. *Continued from page 185.*

### CHAP. V.

#### *Of Adjectives.*

#### SECT. III. *Degrees of Comparison.*

MANY adjectives are subjected to variations, which indicate a comparison of the degree in which a quality is to be attached to different objects. There are adjectives which do not admit of this variation, because there are qualities which do not admit of degrees. Such are some of those which denote figure; as, circular, quadrangular, and triangular. Adjectives subjected to degrees of comparison, are those which express qualities, which admit of being more or less intense. No language is without separate words to signify comparison. But an expression of that act is so frequently required, that it has been found convenient to combine the sign of it with the adjective, in the form of a termination.

Three degrees have been enumerated; the positive, the comparative, and the superlative. But the positive form is the simple state of the adjective, and should not be called a degree of comparison.

The comparative degree is formed, in Latin, by adding the syllables *ior* to the radical letters of the simple adjective; the superlative by adding the syllables *issimus*; as *mitis*, *mitior*, *mitissimus*; in English, by adding the syllables “er” and “est,” as, “meek, meeker, meekest.” When the euphony of our language does not admit of this mode of formation, the same thing is expressed by prefixing to the simple adjective the adverbs “more” and “most.” Several grammarians have described the meaning of these degrees of comparison as consisting in this, that the comparative expresses a comparison betwixt two objects, i. e. a comparison of one with another one; while the superlative expresses a comparison with many, i. e. with the whole of a class. But we find that the comparative degree may be employed for comparing an object with ma-



ny others as well as with one; as when we say, "He was *wiser* than all his teachers;" "Charity is *better* than a thousand sacrifices." The superlative degree, in its turn, may be used when only two objects are compared, as, "James is the *wisest* of the two." The difference betwixt these two sorts of expression, which should rather be called *forms* than *degrees* of comparison, is, that the comparative considers the subjects compared as belonging to different classes, while the superlative compares them as included in one. When we compare two men, if we oppose the one to the other,—we use the comparative, and say, "that he is *taller* than that other;" but when we place the two together to form a group, and point out the superior rank which one of them holds in this group, we say, "He is the *tallest* of the two."

In like manner a comparison in which more than two are concerned may be expressed either by the comparative or the superlative. The comparative is thus used when we say, "Greece was more polished than any other nation of antiquity." Here Greece is considered as not belonging to the class mentioned after the words "more polished." For this purpose these nations are designated by the term *other*. "Greece was none of those *other* nations; it was more polished than they." The same idea is expressed by the superlative when the word *other* is left out; "Greece was the most polished nation of antiquity." We here assign it the highest place in the class of objects among which we number it,—the nations of antiquity. A similar option is left in conveying such sentiments as the following: "Mr. Fox spoke more forcibly than any other member of the House;" which may also be thus expressed, "Mr. Fox spoke the most forcibly of all the members of the House."

The comparative is indeed sometimes used instead of the superlative where there are only two in a group; as when we say in Latin, *senior fratrum*, and in English, "the elder of the brothers;" "the wiser or the taller of the two." The frequency with which the comparative form of the adjective is employed in comparing only two, has misled some technical grammarians to state it as a principle, that this is the only proper form where no more than two objects are concerned, even although they should be represented as belonging to the same collection or class. But though habit has admitted some instances of this phraseology, it is an error to form such a rule, and it is injudicious to check any tendency to use the superlative in its original application.

#### SECT. IV. Numerals.

NUMERALS have the same relation to the substantive noun as adjectives, and therefore belong

to this class of words. They express a modification or limitation of the idea conveyed by some substantive. Their peculiar object is, to denote the degree of frequency with which any sort of thought contained in a noun is repeated; that is, the frequency of the exemplification of a general idea.

In English, the singular number is sometimes merely distinguished from the plural by the want of the terminating *s*, as "the house" for the singular, and "the houses" for the plural. At other times the word "one," or the word "an," or "a," is prefixed. "An" and "a" have been called by grammarians indefinite articles, but in this there is no propriety. They merely signify unity, and this is expressed by them in the most definite manner. In the French language, they are always translated by *un*. They ought, therefore, to be called numeral adjectives. They cannot be prefixed to plural nouns, being peculiar to the singular, or the exhibition of an idea without repetition.

The words "some" and "several" are used as general plural adjectives. There are others implying the result of a general comparison with respect to number; as "few" and "many." But these words do not describe the frequency of the repetition with precision, and for this purpose language is furnished with corresponding numeral adjectives. One added to one, forms a number which has the separate name "two:" one and one and one, or two and one, have the name "three:" one repeated once more, or a repetition of two, forms the number called "four." Our idea of number, as a separate subject of thought and of language, has no existence previous to our experience in numbering individuals. This gives rise to the observation of a general feature in the acts of the mind, called numbering; and hence the generalization of numbers. Words signifying a particular degree of repetition, become applicable to all acts of the mind in which an idea is repeated with the same frequency.

The general words expressive of numbers are derived from the names of particular objects; though, perhaps, we can seldom succeed in tracing them. As the two sides of the body exhibit pairs of organs, two eyes, for example, and two hands, the word for "two" might arise from the most interesting of these pairs. Perhaps the numeral *tres*, "three," has been borrowed from the idea of vibration, and owes its etymology to the verb *tremor*, or some older verb of the same meaning. The two words are at least evidently akin. The words first used to express the succeeding numbers might be suggested by the first two or three, with the help of a sign intimating *reduplication*, as in "two," "four," and "eight," or *addition*, as in "five," "six," "seven," and "nine."

Numeration by *tens* has, with very few exceptions, taken place in every part of the world. This



has been suggested by the numbering of the fingers, which form an assemblage familiar to us from our childhood. The word for "ten" would therefore be borrowed from the word signifying "hand," or "fingers." *Δεκα* in Greek, and *decem* in Latin, evidently spring from the same root with *δευτερος* and *digitus*, a finger. The combinations of tens with one another, and the addition of the words for the different units, are prominent processes in the words employed among the ancients as well as the moderns for the higher numbers, and in the marks invented to express them compendiously in writing.

#### SEC. V. *The Article.*

THERE is one adjective which, from some peculiarity, has been generally reckoned a separate part of speech, under the title of "the definite article." The English words *an* and *a* have been called indefinite articles, but their nature has been shown to be that of numeral adjectives. The words *ὁ, ἡ, το, η, τα*, in Greek, *the* in English, *le* and *la* in French, and the corresponding words in other languages, have been called the definite articles: but they have every characteristic of the adjective. They have even corresponding inflexions in those languages in which adjectives are inflected. Their general meaning, and the purpose of the speaker in using them, are the same with those of the adjective. They represent an idea or quality subordinate to an object expressed by a substantive noun. This quality consists in a reference to some previous mention, or to some knowledge previously possessed of an object. A historian, after having named and described a variety of objects, speaks familiarly of them, by using their general names preceded by the adjective *the*, as, "the army," "the town," "the battle," "the siege," and "the truce."

Another use of it is, for attaching a speciality by means of a genitive case, or another adjective, or some of those phrases which we shall afterwards show to be equivalent; as, "*the* King of Prussia," "*the* Governor of Malta," and also, "*the* French nation," "*the* Italian territory," "*the* Christian religion." Where no speciality is attached, it means, "known by former mention," or, "mutually understood betwixt the speaker and the hearer." Where it is followed by the genitive or another adjective, it means, "to be known or distinguished by this mark."

Some classes of objects are never mentioned without the use of this adjective, as, "*the* French," "*the* English." This phraseology has arisen from the habit of prefixing the words French and English to more general nouns, as, "the French or En-

glish people." We say, "the French are gay;" "the English love the pleasures of the table." We have, indeed, equivalent expressions without the article, in the words "Frenchmen," and "Englishmen."

The only circumstances which have led to the idea that the article was a distinct part of speech, seem to be the same which we have mentioned of the pronoun, viz. its brevity, and its frequency. It is a mistaken notion to consider it as possessing the power of distinguishing the application of a generic name to an individual, from the use of that name in a less definite acceptance. It has not this power in a greater degree than other adjectives. If we speak of "the man," we no more distinguish any individual, than when we say "a man" and not so much as when we say, "a wise man." It is only after an individual has already been distinguished that the adjective "the" characterizes him, by referring to that description. It is of very general and familiar application; because any object may be mentioned as already known, or may be introduced with a view of being characterized by some special mark. Like every other adjective, it becomes fitted to particularize the intended object in proportion as it is used with skill and propriety.

Mr. Tooke (vol. ii. p. 60.) derives "the" from the Saxon verb *the-an*, "to take," of which he supposes it to be the imperative. "The man," accordingly, means "take man;" and implies a direction to the hearer to select an individual from the rest of the class. This is its meaning, when the object is first introduced for the purpose of being described. When afterwards used for reference, it must mean "taken" or "selected."

Very nearly allied to the adjective "the" are the words "this" and "that," which have been denominated by grammarians adjective pronouns. "That" is considered by Mr. Tooke as also derived from *the-an*, "to take," and as, in fact, its past participle. In actual application "this" means "near," and "that" "at a distance." Another adjective, "yonder," signifies "at a considerable distance," or on the other side of something referred to. "This" and "that" are either prefixed to nouns, as "this man," "that thing," or are used by themselves, as "this is good," "that is indifferent." In the last form of speech there is a subaudition of the noun; or the adjective may be considered as converted into a substantive noun, in the same manner as we have shown that many substantives are created. Like them, it expresses one quality, with a subaudition of the rest. An adjective used with the subaudition of a substantive, is very nearly akin to a substantive formed from an adjective by subaudition.



# ARITHMETICAL AND MATHEMATICAL DEPARTMENT.

## OF DIVISION.

(Continued from page 186.)

WHEN a partial dividend that will not contain the divisor occurs, it is evident that this can only be, because the quotient has no units of the rank of this dividend; and those which this same dividend includes, come from the products of the divisor by the units of the lower ranks in the quotient. When this happens, then a 0 should be placed in the quotient, to fill the place of the rank of units which is wanting. For example—

Divisor. Dividend. Quotient.

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \overline{) 1535 (307} \\ \underline{15} \phantom{00} \\ 035 \\ \underline{35} \\ 00 \end{array}$$

The division of the 15 hundreds of the dividend by the divisor, leaving no remainder, the 3 tens, which form the second partial dividend, cannot contain the divisor. It results from this, that the quotient can have no tens, and consequently, that their place must be filled by a 0, in order to give to the last figure of the quotient the place which it must hold in relation to the others; then, by bringing down the first figure of the dividend, a third partial dividend is formed, which, being divided by 5, gives 7 for the units of the quotient, and this amounts to 307.

The considerations explained in the first example, apply equally to the cases in which the divisor contains any number of figures whatever. Suppose it to be required, for example, to divide 57981 by 251, it will be easily seen that the quotient has no figures above hundreds, because, if it had only thousands, the dividend would contain hundreds of thousands, which is not the case; and more, this figure of the hundreds must be such, that being multiplied by 251, it may give for a product 579, or the multiple of 251 that shall be the nearest to 579, a necessary restriction, on account of the carried figures, which the multiplication of the other

figures of the quotient by the divisor may have furnished. The number that satisfies this condition is 2; but 2 hundreds multiplied by 251, make 502 hundreds, of which the dividend contains 579: the difference 77 hundreds proceeds then from the carried figures resulting from the multiplication of the units and tens of the quotient by the divisor.

If, now, the partial product 502 hundreds, or 50200, be subtracted from the whole product 57981, the remainder, 7781, will contain the product of the units and tens of the quotient by the divisor; and the whole will reduce itself still to finding a number which, being multiplied by 251, may give 7781 for their product. Then, when the first figure of the quotient shall be found, the number which it expresses must be multiplied by the divisor; and, on subtracting the partial from the entire product, a new dividend will result, which must be wrought upon like the former; and so on in succession until the dividend shall be exhausted.

In general, to obtain the first figure of the quotient, it is always necessary to separate from the left of the dividend, figures enough, considered as representing simple units, to allow the number which they express to contain the divisor, and to perform this partial division.

On disposing the operations as before, the calculations just explained will be executed in the following order:

$$\begin{array}{r} 251 \overline{) 57981 (231} \\ \underline{502} \phantom{00} \\ 778 \\ \underline{753} \phantom{00} \\ 251 \\ \underline{251} \phantom{00} \\ 000 \end{array}$$

The three first figures on the left of the dividend are taken to form the first partial dividend; it is divided by the divisor; the number 2 resulting is placed in the quotient, the divisor is multiplied by this number; the product 502, is written under the partial dividend 579. After performing the subtraction, the 8 tens of the dividend are brought down by the side of the remainder 77; this new partial dividend is divided by the divisor; 3 is obtained for the second figure of the quotient; the divisor is multiplied by this number; the product is subtracted from the corresponding dividend; and the last figure 1 of the dividend is brought down by the side of the remainder 25; this last partial dividend 251 being equal to the divisor, gives 1 for the units of the quotient.



## POETRY.

WE have once expressed our opinion of the talents and poetry of Mr. SAMUEL WOODWORTH. In our estimation he stands very high. The smoothness and harmony of his verse, equal any metrical pieces with which we are acquainted. We acknowledge these to be great excellencies in every species of composition; but there is one, which outweighs all others, viz. *purity of sentiment*. In his poems, there is a happy combination of elegance of expression and chasteness of thought; in them there is nothing to alarm the fears of the pious or offend the eye of modesty. They have received our warmest approbation; we have given it not because he is an American, but because we consider his poetry deserving all the merit which we have attributed to it.

We extract, from a volume of his poems lately published by Mr. Baldwin, the following on *Friendship*, which we believe will be perused with real satisfaction. It will extend the reputation of the author of "*The Bucket*," which, in our opinion, is of sterling merit, and would have done credit to Gray, Parnell, or Goldsmith.

## FRIENDSHIP.

WHAT power can prop a sinking soul,  
Oppress'd with woes and sick of grief,  
Bid the warm tear forbear to roll,  
Despair's heart-rending sigh control,  
And whisper sweet relief?

*Friendship!* sweet balm for sorrow's smart,  
In thee the soothing power is found,  
To heal the lacerated heart,  
Extract affliction's venom'd dart,  
And close the rankling wound.

When pierc'd by grief's chill tempest through,  
The tendril bends beneath its power,  
Thou canst the broken plant renew;  
Thy sacred tear, like heavenly dew,  
Revives the drooping flower.

If Fortune frown—if Health depart,  
Or death divide the tenderest tie,  
Friendship can raise the sinking heart,  
A glow of real joy impart,  
And wipe the tearful eye.

If foes without attack our name,  
Or foes within assault our peace,  
Then Friendship's pure celestial flame,  
Can sooth the mind—defend our fame,  
And bid assailants cease.

If hopeless *Love* our bliss destroy,  
And fill the breast with black despair,  
All peace such sufferers can enjoy,  
Is built by Friendship's kind employ,  
Which lessens every care.

Come, then, sweet power, of source divine,  
For ever glow within my breast;  
My earliest friend be ever mine,  
One link our hearts in union join,  
To make each other blest.

WE have oftentimes seen the effusions of a poetical writer under the signature of the "*Boston Bard*." We believe that the author's real name is R. C. COFFIN, and that he is a resident of Philadelphia. There is a great deal of intrinsic excellence in his poetry. We give the following as an instance of good metre and correct thought.

## THE GRAVE OF THE DUELLIST.

Who sleeps beneath this dreary mound?  
Whose ashes here repose?  
Say not, 'tis holy, hallowed ground—  
There's blood upon the rose!  
Does there a hero sleep beneath,  
Some chief of spotless fame?  
The flowerets here no fragrance breathe—  
No marble speaks his name!  
Is it the lover's withered form,  
That lies so dark and low?  
I hear no requiem but the storm—  
No mournful sound of woe!  
Is it Religion's humble child,  
That sleeps in silence here?  
Around this spot, so dread and wild,  
I view no friendly tear.  
No—he whose dust is here enshrined,  
Possessed a ruffian's heart—  
No wreath, by Beauty's hand entwined,  
Did fame to him impart.  
Religion wept not o'er his grave,  
No friend his loss did mourn;  
He lived, of honour false, the SLAVE—  
He died his COUNTRY'S SCORN.

BOSTON BARD.

## COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS.

Ubi passim

Palantes error recto de tramite pellit.

HORACE, *Lib. 2. Sat. 3.*

"Where error drives them in endless deviations from the right path."

Literature, well or ill conducted, is the grand engine by which all civilized states must be supported, or ultimately overthrown.

*Pursuits of Literature.*

THE friends of literature and science may perhaps have cause to rejoice at the growing prospects of education in the United States. Our colleges have poured out a great number of graduates, some of



whom we hope are to exalt the character of our nation by the exercise of their talents and learning. In every part of the union, the cry about the state of our universities seems to be raised; and we hope, in the conflict of feeling and sentiment which appear to be manifested on the occasion, that much good may result; a reformation of abuses where it may be necessary; an enlargement of the course of studies; the employment of men of abilities; and crushing some, that are no more entitled to the name of universities or colleges than many of our common schools. We are not sure, that a multiplicity of these places of education extends science, or benefits the community. At least, we are convinced, that colleges in name only, prove detrimental to expansion of intellect, and retard the progress of improvement. If schools, in which are to be found no science or moral rectitude, sap the very foundations of society, we are no less convinced, that colleges which arrogate to themselves much, but have no foundation on which they may base their arrogant pretensions, are if possible, still more pernicious. Seldom do we see in any place of learning, where there is not talent to preside, youth acquire any thing but a supercilious petulance, the husks of science, or an opinion that they are wondrous wise, when every man of common sense knows them to be fools. The attainment of technical terms, or a smattering of Latin and Greek, will not compel the thinking to acknowledge these as characteristics of genius or integrity of conduct. They are no more the marks of a superiority of intellect, than a knowledge of the French is a mark of a mathematician. These, to the exclusion of all natural or physical science, will make but a poor show; and as much as the sticklers for Latin and Greek think of these, they will neither make a man wiser nor better, unless with them is joined an enlargement of mind, which, perhaps, is more to be expected from moral and physical science than from any thing else. We know full well, that there are many in society (and among them teachers, from whom better things might be expected) who rate the talents of men from their knowledge of the languages, and consider all who are unable to scan the metres of Horace or Virgil, or translate Pindar or Homer, as dolts and blockheads, fit only to be made the sport of such marvellously wise beings as themselves. No men, perhaps, admire the writings of the ancients, or value them more than we; but we must confess, that we can see no shade of reason why so much time is devoted to them in schools and colleges, while the physical sciences are in many almost wholly neglected. In France, where the human mind is as highly cultivated as in any part of the world, we do not find youth trammelled down by the languages; but, while to these a proper attention is given, the physical sciences are not for-

gotten. The languages may adorn sense, but sense they cannot give.

There is scarcely a state which has not pretensions to something called college or university. We know that some of these *somethings*\* are mere impositions, and that nothing of any importance can be expected to result from them, while they are regulated as they are, or are so deficient in talents to rule over them. We need not anticipate, that literature will flourish to any great extent in our collegiate establishments, unless there is a solid course of instruction pursued, men of genius to instruct, and a steady and firm discipline be kept up. Our colleges, collectively, are shamefully neglected in these

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\* The following extract of a letter from Mr. GIDEON M'MILLAN, of Dayton, Ohio, is worthy of consideration. He is a valuable correspondent.

"A few individuals here have sometimes made fruitless exertions to effect a reformation; but so widely has ignorance extended her reign among all classes, from the state representative to the poor mechanic, that I fear a long time is yet required to effect any thing great. It is a deplorable truth, that many of the members of the legislature have no more knowledge of the political state and physical resources of their country, than a paltry paper, edited by a man as ignorant as themselves, affords them. They are so ignorant in geography, as not to know the difference between latitude and longitude; and their knowledge of history is about as copious as that of a pedantic schoolmaster, whom I once heard maintaining, that "*Archimedes was killed at the siege of Troy by a Roman soldier!*" In imitation of some of the sister states, they have granted large tracts of land, in different sections of Ohio, for the purpose of promoting the cause of literature: large buildings have been raised, but no care is taken to procure competent teachers. The first person who offers himself, is employed as a *professor*. Such is the case at ——. Great care is taken by the teachers of that seminary to obtain, but none to retain pupils. Scholars are sent to the *moderu*, with the same design that Horace went to ancient Athens, "*ut possent dignoscere rectum: atque inter sylvas Academi querere verum;*" but I am sorry to say, they go away completely disappointed. They are hurried through their Latin rudiments into *Liber Primus*: and before they can be supposed to have acquired much knowledge of the construction of the language, or to have any taste for the beautiful and sublime style of the Mantuan bard, he is put into their hands, and his verses they are taught *perdere stridenti stipulâ*, viz. a literal translation. Horace, Cicero, &c. come next, and share the same fate, being gabbled over by means of the same pernicious helps, and at the end of two or three sessions, the scholar quits the college (as it is called) just ready to enter *Liber Primus* again!—The cause of literature is regarded with a more auspicious eye at Cincinnati. The school established there will, I am persuaded, call forth the imitation of many neighbouring towns, and may be the means of effecting a happy reformation, if intelligent school committees be chosen, who will interpose between quacks and the public, and thoroughly guard the latter from the imposition of the former."



respects. It is true, we are *building colleges*, but pay little attention to the means by which they may exist. It would be no less folly to commence the building of a church at the steeple, and proceed downwards, till we should come to the foundation. We are under the impression, that *fewer* of these establishments, on a more extensive scale, and *better* regulated, would answer the expectations of the friends of literature, and prove far more beneficial to society. Colleges, like banks, if multiplied, will destroy themselves, and those who are concerned in them.

For colleges, conducted as all places of learning ought to be conducted, we entertain the highest respect; because from these, those who are to support the liberties of our country, and exalt her in the scale of learning among the nations of the earth, are to receive, in part, the means by which these are to be accomplished. Although we acknowledge this, yet we are by no means convinced, that colleges are the only places in which human beings may be prepared for society. But a comparatively small number of our youth can be blessed with a collegiate education; they must from necessity, be limited to common schools. It is not doubted, that it is a wise policy to organize a course of studies for our higher places of learning, as they are called, nor should it be doubted, though by the conduct of our citizens we should judge it to be so, that it would be equally as wise a policy to organize a plan of solid instruction in every section of the union, which will place our youth, at least, on a level, in the active concerns of life, with graduates. Elementary schools require the fostering hand of the patrons of learning as much as our colleges; but by some unaccountable caprice or neglect, little or no attention is paid to them. We anticipate a different result, however, at least, in the city of New-York, as soon as the HIGH SCHOOL gets into operation; every thing seems favourable to it; many of our teachers and literati have taken an active part; and the exertions of the one must necessarily aid those of the other. When this school shall have arrived at that period, to which every friend of his country is anxious to see it, we believe the citizens will have ample justice done them from the great body of instructors: and those teachers, who have often failed in receiving that credit by which alone they can live, but which has been taken from them in a manner not very honourable to the ones who have done it, (often by vile insinuations, mingled with calumny, and sometimes by open denunciations,) will then have an opportunity of vindicating to themselves their pretensions, and thus showing to the public the *treachery* and *malignity* by which some of those, who pretend to be the guardians of our youths' morals and talents, are actuated. We hope, then, to see those men who have trampled down the laws

of honour, which are supposed to exist between members of the same profession, treated with that indignation which their conduct justly merits. To the credit of the great body of instructors in this city, there are but few who violate the feelings and character of their fraternity; but those who do, (we speak of both English and classical teachers,) do it with shameless tongues and audacious countenances.

More of this hereafter. To return. The truth is, the progressive steps by which a youth ascends the hill of science, are too often considered as unworthy of notice; but we believe there are few, on mature consideration, who are so stupid as not to see, that a solid preparation for college is indispensable to the pupil's future progress, and that our elementary schools are the nurseries of our universities. The only thing necessary to insure a radical proficiency for collegiate entrance\* and success, seems to be the want of a solid system of instruction and qualified instructors in our elementary schools. With respect to those teachers engaged in the system of instruction adopted by the state of New-York, the law requires, that all shall be duly examined by the district school committees, before they can assume the high responsibilities pertaining to the scholastic office. Were a law of this nature enacted, and enforced with the utmost rigour in every state, and all who wish to become teachers tried by it, it would exclude from the profession that swarm of ignorant, idle and vicious itinerants, who arrogate to themselves a universal remedy for stupidity and idleness. It requires no uncommon exertion of reflection to perceive what must be the ultimate result, when such men stand at the head of our places of learning. These causes may be removed, were proper means taken. Men of talents and integrity are the ones sought for by those who wish their children to be taught well; but let it be remembered, that in order to procure them, they must respect and remunerate them. But in place of these, both the common forms of civility, and a compensation of their labours, are often denied to the very persons they are anxious to get. Many will dispute a teacher's bill for six cents; but they will spend twenty dollars in visiting the theatre, or in expenses for a tea party. We have heard it even among the most wealthy and polite, that "the schooling of their children is extravagantly high, and that they do not get the worth of their money, and children's time."—This is no doubt in many in-

\* The Editors know it to be a fact, that, in several of our colleges, students have entered (contrary too to their specified rules) who knew nothing of grammar, geography or history, and whose knowledge of arithmetic did not extend beyond the compound rules. Was this done merely to get students? Such things are shameful!



stances true: but let parents employ such persons as will do their children justice, and they will not have cause to complain.

The flimsy system of instruction, if system it may be called, acted upon by men who have no experience, or who have become teachers to prevent starvation, is extremely dangerous to intellectual improvement. They require no exertion of mind, no study on the part of the pupil. They promise much, but do little. They always have some new plan by which the ignorant are to be made wise in a few minutes, and all mental defects supplied. What would require many years' study and application, under the direction of the most skillful instructors, is to be accomplished in eight or ten lessons, or by a course of lectures! What the experience of ages testifies to be correct, is to be refuted by some machine, wooden oracle, or magic lantern, in an hour! This mockery even on empiricism, ought to make the most brazen faced quacks ashamed; but as long as they can find persons who are so credulous as to put implicit confidence in the pretensions of such "BRAGADOCIOS," some of whom we understand brag aloud in their schools of their own abilities, they will have just grounds for exclaiming against the expenses of education, and the impositions of designing instructors. Although too many of our citizens are daily deceived, yet we rejoice to learn, that men at the head of our literature, and some of our most influential and intelligent citizens, have taken a strong stand against them, and are determined to drive from society all of this description.

There are some other notable tricks which ought to be exposed. One is, the practice of teachers' going round "to beg scholars." It is true there is nothing criminal in it, but it renders them so much below themselves, that all their instructions are of very little effect. It is a manly dignity and moral deportment that will command respect, not cringing importunity or fulsome adulation. Children and parents despise a literary beggar as much as they do a necessitous one. "Sir, if you will send your children to me, I will teach them better than any other person, and for less. I will take them for two dollars, or for nothing, rather than they should go to Mr. ——. I will instruct them for nothing!"—This is the language which teachers of this description use: it no doubt well becomes their motives. It is affirmed, and we believe it, that some foul play exists among teachers of a certain cast. They most insidiously endeavour to destroy the reputation of others of their profession, by depreciating their characters and abilities in the presence of their scholars. How mean, how pitiable, how impolitic!—But where is the parent who wishes his children's minds contaminated with the pestiferous breath of calumny and detraction? We trust there is none who would suffer his innocent little ones to

set under the instruction of a teacher guilty of a practice so base and detestable as this.

From these general observations, the public will see that there is need of a reformation in the character and abilities of many of our instructors, and in the system of instruction adopted and pursued in many of our schools and colleges. Our remarks on the latter, are not meant for any individual place.

## LITERARY.

### DARBY'S TOUR.

This gentleman has now in the press his observations, made during a tour last summer, in the northern part of this state, and the adjacent regions. From the publications of Mr. Darby, we are always sure to be amply remunerated for our time in their perusal by the useful information they afford. Few works for extensive and scientific investigation, have higher claims to public attention than his LOUISIANA, and the EMIGRANT'S GUIDE. His abilities are so well known as to be a recommendation to any work he may lay before the public.

*Haines on the Great Western Canal. 2d Edition, with many additions.*

This work is well deserving the notice of our citizens. The subject of which it treats, so important in itself, and the accomplishment of which must prove so beneficial to the state, is handled in a masterly manner. It has met with high encomiums from the learned: it deserves them, and as a useful treatise, we recommend it to the inhabitants of our great and flourishing state.

### Tytler's Elements of History.

An edition of this valuable work is now in press, continued to the present period by a gentleman of talents and learning. It will be published as speedily as possible. We have already expressed our opinion of it as it was written by Mr. Tytler. The original work has passed through several editions in England as well as in America. It is a most excellent summary of Ancient and Modern History, and will undoubtedly be introduced into all our places of learning, by those who are capable of appreciating its merits. This much wanted school book will be ready for delivery in a few days, at Mess. D. D. Smith, E. Duyckinck, and G. Long's.

*Baker's Moral Philosophy, published by D. Longworth.*

This little work has much merit. It is an abridgement of Paley's celebrated treatises on Moral Philosophy, Natural Theology, and Evidences of Revealed Religion. For schools it will be found to answer every purpose of the large work. We know of no treatise of this kind that is better adapted to the course of instruction for the higher classes in our seminaries than this, and as such we recommend it to the attention of those engaged in instructing youth.